

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NAIROB 02200 171344Z

41

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 171227Z MAR 75
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1904

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 2200

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, KE
SUBJECT: POLITICAL SITUATION IN KENYA

1. POLITICAL SITUATION IN KENYA HAS ARRIVED AT THAT INEVITABLE POINT IN TIME: KENYATTA'S REIGN APPEARS TO BE REACHING AN END. FORCEFUL AND DETERMINED LEADER MZEE, WHO LED HIS COUNTRY INTO INDEPENDENCE AND SET THE COURSE, HAS SADLY LOST CONTROL AND RESPECT. HE IS NOW LOSING AUTHORITY. PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES RESULT OF LAST TWO YEARS OF GROWING DISSATISFACTION BY KENYANS WITH MANAGEMENT OF COUNTRY, CORRUPTION AMONG HIGH OFFICIALS (PARTICULARLY ACCUSING FINGER DIRECTED AT MAMA NGINA), ACTION AND INACTION OVER LAND ISSUES, SLUMPING ECONOMY (NOT ENTIRELY KENYAN FAULT), EROSION OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY, FEAR OF NEIGHBORS WHOSE MILITARY STRENGTH FAR EXCEEDS KENYA'S, FAILURE TO INCREASE WAGES IN ARMY, AS WELL AS INABILITY OF AGING LEADER TO FOCUS ON DAILY NATIONAL ISSUES, SPEND SUFFICIENT TIME ON MATTERS OF STATE, DELEGATE AUTHORITY. FALL FROM THRONE OF NEIGHBORING LION OF JUDAH PROVIDED NO CUE TO MZEE.

2. INCIDENTS AFFECTING MZEE HAVE RECENTLY ACCELERATED AND SO HAS KENYAN PUBLIC CHANGE OF HEART TOWARD HIM. CRITICISM IS OPEN WHEREAS YEAR AGO IT WAS WHISPERED. TWO YEARS AGO, UNHEARD OF. COUNTRY HOLDS KENYATTA RESPONSIBLE FOR
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J.M. KARIUKI'S DEATH. THREE BOMBING INCIDENTS, TRAIN

DERAILMENT HAVE BECOME MAJOR ISSUES. KARIUKI'S DEATH BECOMES FOCAL POINT ON WHICH FULCRUM OF PUBLIC OPINION HAS TIPPED IRREVOCABLY AGAINST THE OLD MAN.

3. MZEE COULD STILL PERHAPS SAVE HIMSELF FROM A DOUBTFUL FUTURE AND THE COUNTRY FROM POLITICAL AGONY IF HE WERE TO RETIRE AS HONORARY CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD APPOINTING PRIME MINISTER, RESHUFFLING CABINET INTRODUCING NEW BLOOD. PAINFUL AS IT WILL BE IF HE DOES NOT TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION, IT NEVERTHELESS IS AGAINST HIS NATURE TO RELINQUISH THE REIGNS OF POWER.

4. PURPOSE OF THIS TELEGRAM BESIDES COMMUNICATING MY PESSIMISM OVER THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE IS TO REPORT MY OPINION THAT FUTURE OF KENYA STILL HAS PROMISE. HOWEVER, THE LONGER IT TAKES TO MAKE THE POLITICAL CHANGE, THE LONGER THE PERIOD OF READJUSTMENT. ALTHOUGH EVENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS WOULD INDICATE RELATIVELY SPEEDY CHANGE POSSIBLY TAKING PLACE (FORCED ABDICATION OR ASSASSINATION OF MZEE), PROLONGING INCIDENT OF CHANGE (INTO SEVERAL WEEKS OR MONTHS) IS POSSIBLE.

5. KENYA HAS THE LEADERSHIP (TESTED AND NEW), GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE TO CREATE A STRONG KENYA DURING ITS SECOND DECADE OF INDEPENDENCE. WE TOLD BE BE PATIENT DURING THIS TRANSITION, MAINTAIN A LOW PROFILE, LET THE KENYANS WORK OUT THEIR PROBLEM, STANDING READY TO CONTINUE OUR ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT IN THE FUTURE WITH THE NEW LEADERSHIP AS IT IDENTIFIES ITSELF.
MARSHALL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: woolflhd
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NAIROB02200
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750092-0668
From: NAIROBI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750344/aaaabnp0.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 AUG 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <19 DEC 2003 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL SITUATION IN KENYA
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, KE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006